

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Gar-Kenyon Technologies

Connecticut State Technology Extension Program

Gar-Kenyon Technologies Accelerates Improvement Efforts with Lean

Client Profile:

Gar-Kenyon Technologies, located in Naugatuck, Connecticut, designs and manufactures precision engineered hydraulic and pneumatic actuators, restrictors, shuttle valves, check valves, flow fuses, breaking devices and other components for the commercial and military aviation industries. The family-owned business is a long-term supplier to companies including Cessna, Bombardier/Learjet, Lockheed-Martin, Gulfstream, and Bell Helicopter. Their parts can be found in every kind of airplane made today. Gar-Kenyon employs 70 people.

Situation:

By 2007 Gar-Kenyon was beginning to grow, but was also experiencing growing pains. The biggest problem was on-time customer delivery. It was only 50 percent because the CNC shop was not as productive as it needed to be and because the company's suppliers were not performing well. The average part velocity was too low and overtime hours were high. Gar-Kenyon's CEO, Steve Fournier, had previously contacted the Connecticut State Technology Extension Program (CONNSTEP), a NIST MEP network affiliate, when he brought them in to get the company AS9100 Certified. When Fournier needed help with strategic planning and Lean deployment, he turned once again to CONNSTEP.

Solution:

CONNSTEP's John McCarroll helped Gar-Kenyon accomplish an enterprise-wide Lean transformation. John began with an intensive three-day strategic planning session with senior management. With the vision of operational excellence in place, John continued working with the company to build Lean into the business strategy and to identify the Lean tools that fit. The outcome of the strategic planning workshop was a set of short, medium, and long-term strategies for continuous improvement. Management conducted customer feedback surveys and set the schedule of continuous improvement activities. Gar-Kenyon's goal was to double the output of the machine shop without adding new employees. CONNSTEP worked with the company to identify and implement the tools that would help them attain this goal. They performed Kaizen and focused their efforts on machine shop productivity, on-time delivery, average part velocity, and improving their supplier contracts. CONNSTEP's assistance resulted in the improvement of on-time delivery, machine setup time, average part velocity, and inventory turns.

Results:

- * Increased sales by 60 percent.
- * Realized \$200,000 in cost savings.
- * Improved on-time delivery by 30 percent.
- * Increased average part velocity by 99 percent.

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Testimonial:

"CONNSTEP is a great resource to Connecticut-based manufacturers. It has a proven track record of making a difference in companies like Gar-Kenyon and I would highly recommend them."

Steve Fournier, CEO/President